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New York

President: Mr. Jeremić ..... (Serbia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Kanda (Ghana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Zillur Rahman, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

The Acting President: Before we proceed to the items on our agenda, it is my sad duty to pay tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Zillur Rahman, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, who passed away on 20 March 2013.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I request the representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to convey our condolences to the Government and the people of Bangladesh and to the bereaved family of His Excellency Mr. Zillur Rahman.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Zillur Rahman.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excelelncy Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I am honoured to be here to pay tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Zillur Rahman, who served as President of Bangladesh since 2009. He was one of Bangladesh's most respected statesmen, with over 50 years of dedicated service to the country and its people. He was elected as the fifteenth President in 2009 and made important contributions to the country's democratic transition throughout his political life. I share the sadness of his bereaved family and the Government and the people of Bangladesh.

My heart also goes out to the families who lost loved ones, homes and livelihoods as a result of the tornado that struck the Brahmanbaria district this past Friday. That is one more reminder of the vulnerability of the people of Bangladesh to climate change, a vulnerability we all increasingly share.

However, despite such sad news, the people of Bangladesh have many reasons to feel positive about their future, and the late President can rest proud in the knowledge that his country has advanced dramatically since independence, 38 years ago. Bangladesh is setting an example in building resilience and disaster preparedness. It is a leader on sustainable development and in seeing great progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

More and more boys and girls are attending school. The maternal and child mortality rate is dropping. The country is strengthening social protection and improving public services, including sanitation and fresh water. Bangladesh has long been a pioneer in microcredit, and its economy is thriving. As a result, Bangladesh is on track to graduate from the ranks of the least developed countries.

Bangladesh is also a leader in women's empowerment. I am particularly proud of the efforts of the Bangladeshi women police officers who serve

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with United Nations peacekeeping missions. They show the women and men in the countries where they serve that there is nothing that a woman cannot do. Women's empowerment is a top priority for me. The women of Bangladesh, from its Prime Minister, Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, to its police officers, are in the vanguard.

Of course, Bangladesh continues to face serious challenges. Population growth, inequality, rising food and energy prices and the need to create decent jobs for young people will all continue to test the country. So, too, will the challenges of democracy and the reconciliation, healing and justice related to the struggle for independence.

President Rahman believed in independence for Bangladesh. He worked for that and was one of the country's leading political figures. His reward in his final years was the presidency — an acknowledgement of a lifetime of dedication. Today, we mourn his loss but take comfort in the fact that the country that he helped to found is growing stronger by the day.

The Acting President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now give the floor to the representative of Chad, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I speak on behalf of the African Group at this solemn event of the General Assembly to pay tribute to the vivid memory of His Excellency Mr. Zillur Rahman, President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, who has just departed from us. The African Group honours the memory of a person who, with courage and self-sacrifice, made an invaluable contribution to the democratization and the economic and social development of his country throughout his exemplary political life.

On this solemn occasion, the African Group, through my modest person, offers its deep condolences to the family of the late President Rahman, as well as to the Government and the people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the great loss. The Group also expresses its sympathy during these days of sadness and grief that they are experiencing. May the soul of the deceased rest in peace.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States.

Mr. Laram (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group, allow me to extend our sincere condolences on the passing of the President of Bangladesh, Mr. Mohammad Zillur Rahman. I would also like to express our sorrow to his bereaved family and to the Government and the people of the Republic of Bangladesh. Our heartfelt sympathy also goes to His Excellency Ambassador Mr. Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations, and to his staff. We hope that Allah may give them strength after the tragic loss.

The late President was a leader of strong principles and devotion. His commitment to moving his country forward and to improving the living standards of his fellow citizens manifested itself since he was a student. His first steps in serving his country occurred in 1952, when he played a vital role in the language movement. His political commitment became more apparent when he participated in the 1971 liberation war.

When he joined the Awami League, he already had a vision of the role that his country should play at the regional and international levels. From the time that he was elected a Member of Parliament in 1973, and later as President of Bangladesh in 2009, he showed a strong resolve to foster equality among his fellow citizens and to promote the principles of democracy and social justice.

His track record shows how keen he was to improve the living conditions of the have-nots among his own people and to promote the culture of solidarity among the various strata of Bengali society. To achieve those lofty goals, he set out to deal with a number of pressing issues, such as population growth, food shortage, sustainable development, the fight against poverty and the empowerment of women.

During his political career, Bangladesh became a Member of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China. Thanks to his vision and leadership, Bangladesh enjoyed good relations with its neighbouring countries and increased its cooperation with South Asia and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Moreover, his strong commitment to promoting international peace and security turned his country into one of the leading nations that play a vital role in the various United Nations peacekeeping missions. As such, Bangladesh has had a leading role in

peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, Somalia, Rwanda, Mozambique and Kosovo.

What makes the late President's trajectory a source of inspiration for generations to come in his country and elsewhere is the fact that the hardship that he faced during different periods of his life did not affect his resolve to steer his country towards prosperity and progress and to it taking its rightful place in the international community. His life was not without difficulties and sorrow. He was jailed twice during his struggle and suffered a great loss when his wife and fellow combatant, Mrs. Ivy Rahman, was murdered in 2004.

The Asia-Pacific Group reiterates its deep sorrow on the loss of a visionary man, whose wisdom and leadership will be missed and remembered.

We wish the people of Bangladesh well in the future and reaffirm the Asia-Pacific Group's commitment to working in close cooperation with his successor. May he rest in peace.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Moldova, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Lupan (Republic of Moldova): On behalf of the Eastern European Group, allow me to convey our deepest and heartfelt condolences to the grieving family of His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Zillur Rahman, to the Acting President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and to the Government and the people of Bangladesh on the passing away of President Rahman.

The late President was regarded as a respected political figure of Bangladesh who gained the respect of the political forces inside his country and outside alike. He was one of the veteran organizers of the creation of Bangladesh from 1971 and the key personality in defending and consolidating the country's democratic evolution.

Thanks to his dedication and loyalty to the progress of his country, he succeeded in improving the welfare of citizens and in increasing their quality of life, including by strongly promoting regional economic integration in South Asia. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recognized the contribution of the late President Rahman, saying on the day that the leader of Bangladesh passed away that the late President Mohammad Zillur Rahman had made important contributions to the country's democratic transition throughout his political life. We support such an appraisal.

It is an irrevocable loss for the country of Bangladesh and for its people. His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Zillur Rahman will be remembered in his homeland and abroad. May he rest in peace.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Saint Lucia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Ms. Louis (Saint Lucia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Latin American and Caribbean Group to pay tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Zillur Rahman, the late President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. We honour a man who was widely revered and hardly reviled, who rose from a mere member to the highest office of the State and who participated actively in the watersheds in Bangladesh's political history. As a career politician, he was eminently equipped to be part of a process that consistently emphasized the primacy of democratic order in the country. He embodied an unyielding dedication to the people of Bangladesh. Although he endured trials and challenges during his long and distinguished public service, he always overcame them and emerged even more determined to uphold the cause of the masses.

President Zillur Rahman was born of a generation whose resolute allegiance to democracy and its ideals inspired a nation to fight a liberation war in 1971. Forty-two years to the day, we pay homage to the man who was an active participant in the establishment of his country as an independent nation. He is survived by his children, his legacy, the dignity that he brought to politics, his steady compassion and his unflinching courage. His was always the spirit of a determined fighter for democracy. May that spirit endure in the people of Bangladesh as an indelible honour to a patriotic statesman.

The States members of the Latin American and Caribbean Group offer their sympathies to the family of the late President Rahman and mourn with the people of Bangladesh during this sad time.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Finland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Taalas (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Western European and other States Group.

I would like to convey our deepest condolences to the people and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the sad passing away of their Head of State, His Excellency President Mohammad Zillur Rahman.

President Rahman had a long and highly regarded career in Bangladesh politics, earning recognition and respect at home and beyond the country's borders. He was already active during Bangladesh's path to independence. Later on, Mr. Rahman's engagement was essential in shaping the country's development towards democracy.

Mr. Rahman was an avid supporter of regional economic integration in South Asia. Due to his and his colleagues' devotion and hard work, Bangladesh can today offer its citizens improved standards of living and a brighter outlook for the future. Bangladesh also stands strong internationally and remains one of the mainstays of United Nations peacekeeping globally.

Our thoughts and sympathies are with the family and friends of the late President Rahman. We are confident that the people and the Government of Bangladesh will overcome the loss and work together to advance his vision.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the United States Government. We offer our condolences to the people and Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the passing of His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Zillur Rahman, the late President of Bangladesh.

Today, Bangladesh marks the forty-second anniversary of its independence. It is therefore all the more proper, fitting and poignant that we gather here today to pay tribute to President Rahman, who dedicated his life to the nation that he loved. President Rahman's service to his country and his dedication to strengthening Bangladesh's democracystretch back to the country's struggle for independence, when he was a student and political activist. That struggle continued for decades, up to and including his term as President.

Today, on a day that unites all Bangladeshis, we honour President Rahman and offer our sincere sympathies to his family and the Bangladeshi people during this time of sadness.

Mr. Kohona (Sri Lanka): As a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the delegation of Sri Lanka, on behalf of its Government and its people, wishes to express its deepest condolences to the family and to the people and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on the passing away of the late President Mohammad Zillur Rahman.

Former President Rahman became prominent in the politics of the Bengali language movement and was a heroic actor in Bangladesh's liberation struggle. Every country produces a great leader at its most critical time. President Rahman was such a leader. He was instrumental in the creation of the Awami League party. As an active member of each of those movements, he contributed not only to the independence of Bangladesh but also to charting its new journey as an independent and democratic State. He was sent to jail in post-independence Bangladesh.

His vast reservoir of experience made him an astute politician and a party stalwart but, more important, a statesmen who was genuinely respected by his peers across the political spectrum. Deeply imbued with democratic ideals and values, he enriched the Awami League party.

The late President Rahman's stellar leadership qualities endeared him to the public. He was also actively involved in social development activities and environmental conservation. He remained committed to democratic politics despite losing his wife, a fellow Awami League member, to a terrorist attack in 2004. His passing away leaves a void not only in the Awami league party but also in Bangladesh's national political arena.

South Asia, too, has lost a leading statesman. However, we hope that his fine legacy will continue to inspire and serve the people of Bangladesh in the years to come.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): Today is 26 March, our Independence Day. On this very day in 1971, when the enemy forces let loose a genocide, we started a life of death and destruction, a life of hope and sorrows. However, after nine months of bloody war in which 3 million sacrificed their sacred lives and 10 million were forced to take shelter in the neighbouring country, India, after the carnage of the chastity of thousands of courageous females, and after the total eclipse of the economy and the destruction of the development sector of the country, we achieved our independence.

It is pathetic that two days prior to our victory, our intellectuals were rounded up and were all butchered blindfolded. Throughout the history of Bangladesh, therefore, our Independence Day is the observance of joy and sorrow together. While we rejoice in that victory, we cry for dear and near ones. No wonder Shelley very rightly mentioned, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought".

This year, yet another sorrow has impinged on us to endure and commemorate with the passing away of our honourable President Mohammed Zillur Rahman, the most venerated political personality in our country after the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We have gathered here today with heavy hearts to reminisce about his life and achievements. I sincerely thank the President of the General Assembly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and representatives of United Nations States Members for showing respect to this towering personality of Bangladesh.

President Rahman was born on 9 March 1928, and he died in the same month on 20 March 2013. He was 84 years of age. Born as a British Indian, he spent his youth struggling against injustice and died as a national hero. President Rahman was a beacon of light and wisdom. Because of his amiable disposition — a perfect gentleman in the truest sense of the term — he earned respect among all in a country where political polarization is acute and disturbing. He graduated with a Master in History and a law degree and started his career as a lawyer.

While he was a student, young Rahman participated in the historic Bengali language movement of 1952 when people shed blood to protect and preserve their mother language and, of course, culture and values. He was first elected as a member of Pakistan's National Parliament in 1970 and, during the Bangladesh liberation war, Mr. Rahman actively participated in the Bangladesh Government in exile. After the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in 1975, he was arrested by the military junta and spent four years in prison. Mr. Zillur Rahman served as a Cabinet Minister from 1996 through 2001. He was sworn in as the nineteenth President of Bangladesh on 12 February 2009, and he discharged his responsibilities until his death this year.

Mr. Rahman was elected as the General Secretary of his party for a record four times in the history of Bangladesh. After the debacle in Bangladesh on 11 January 2007, when the future of multiparty democracy and stability were at stake and when the nation was is total disarray, Mohammed Zillur Rahman rose to the occasion and took the lead and played a critical role in the restoration of democracy. His wisdom, experience, expertise and political maturity triumphed, and the nation felt a sigh of relief. No wonder he was elected President unopposed.

The sad news is that Mr. Rahman passed many valuable years of his life behind bars. He was arrested during our language movement and during our anti-military movements in the 1960s. A verdict was given for 20 years of prison time when he joined the liberation war, but nothing could shake his strong conviction. Sadly, his wife, Mrs. Ivy Rahman, President of the women's section of the Bangladesh Awami League party, was assassinated by a bomb blast at an anti-terrorism public rally in August 2004, along with 23 others. That attack was intended to kill the opposition leader at the time and current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who was injured but survived.

President Rahman was a father figure full of wisdom and patience. I echo Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who rightly observed that "the country has lost a guardian". I believe we can really pay our homage to late President Zillur Rahman if we truly follow his mantra of friendship towards all and malice towards none, and if we truly follow his wisdom and maturity of working together, working for the good of humankind and for participatory democracy with commitment and determination. His departed soul will rest in eternal peace. May Allah bless his soul.

I thank the United Nations and I thank all the delegations once again for being with us at this very special event.

Agenda item 134 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/67/693/Add. 9)

The Acting President: I should like, in keeping with established practice, to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/67/693/Add.9, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/67/693/Add.8, the Marshall Islands has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in that document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 121 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries Draft resolution (A/67/L.54)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on agenda item 121 and its sub-items (a) to (w) at its 40th plenary meeting, on 19 November 2012.

I now give the floor to the representative of Mozambique to introduce draft resolution A/67/L.54.

Mr. Gumende (Mozambique): On behalf of the member States of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) — Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Portugal, Sao Tomé and Principe, Timor-Leste and my own country, Mozambique — I have the honour to introduce, under agenda item 121, draft resolution A/67/L.54, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries".

Encompassing 240 million people in eight countries and four continents, the CPLP is an organization determined to promote relations of multifaceted cooperation among its member States. The organization is at same time strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other States, as well as with regional and international organizations, including the United Nations and its agencies, funds and programmes. With the United Nations, the CPLP promotes cooperation in vital areas such as health, education, agriculture, public administration and technology, among others, contributing greatly to the economic and social development of our countries. Those cooperation initiatives make the United Nations one of the most relevant partners of the CPLP and its member States.

As part of its political coordination, the Community and its member States are deeply involved in developing efforts, with the United Nations and other regional and international partners, to restore the constitutional order, stability and respect for human rights and to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law in Guinea-Bissau through an inclusive political process. In that respect, we welcome the appointment of His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, former President of Timor-Leste, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau.

As we had the opportunity to inform Member States on 19 November 2012 (see A/67/PV.40), when the Assembly discussed the agenda item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations", this draft resolution is aimed at strengthening the cooperation between the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the specialized agencies and other bodies and programmes of the United Nations.

The draft resolution highlights the measures adopted by the ninth Conference of Heads of State and Government of the CPLP, held in Maputo on 20 July 2012, in particular those aimed at strengthening the human right to adequate food in national and community policies and the objective of eradicating hunger and poverty in the CPLP through the deepening of political and diplomatic coordination and cooperation in all fields.

The draft resolution commends the efforts aimed at promoting the restoration of the constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau in the light of Security Council resolution 2048 (2012), and calls for the need to harmonize the positions of international partners, particularly the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the CPLP and European Union, with a view to a consensus-based, inclusive and nationally owned transition process.

Lastly, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, at its sixty-ninth session, a report on the implementation of the current draft resolution.

We would like therefore to kindly ask that the draft resolution be adopted without a vote.

In conclusion, allow me to express, on behalf of the CPLP member States, our deep appreciation to the countries that contributed to the text and those that sponsored the draft resolution.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/67/L.54.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/67/L.54, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, the United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/67/L.54?

Draft resolution A/67/L.54 was adopted (resolution 67/252).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (g) of agenda item 121?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 31 and 107

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/67/715)

Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh, former Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): On behalf of the members of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), I am pleased to present the report of the Commission on its sixth session (A/67/715). The report is organized around the main functions and work of the Commission and places particular emphasis on the results achieved and the challenges and opportunities related to the impact of the Commission in the field and its relations at Headquarters. It mainstreams the implementation of the relevant recommendations from the 2010 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and incorporates a forward-looking agenda for 2013 as an implementation framework for the recommendations.

Allow me to highlight a number of issues from the report that are of particular importance.

First, there was particular focus on institutional consolidation during the reporting period, which is crucial for the Commission's future role and impact. The Commission launched an ambitious exercise to improve and clarify the Commission's working methods, especially as it relates to its linkage and collaboration with the work of key actors in the field. It also aimed at facilitating the workload of the Chairs of the country-specific configurations to achieve goals on the ground. That process was among the main highlights of the Commission's work in 2012.

Secondly, during the reporting period, the Commission embarked upon a work programme designed to support the Commission's engagement with the six countries on its agenda, namely, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The peacebuilding process in each of those countries is at a different stage, which presents different opportunities and poses different types of challenges.

Some highlights of the Commission's country-specific engagement during the reporting period included, first, the provision of support for the launching of a national reconciliation strategy and the first regional hub for security and justice in Liberia; secondly, support for the successful conduct of elections in Sierra Leone; thirdly, resource mobilization for the peacebuilding pillar of a new poverty-reduction strategy in Burundi, including through support for the successful organization of the Burundi partners' conference in Geneva in October 2012; and, fourthly, the initiation of a resource-mapping exercise in Guinea as an initial step in the eventual development of a national aid management and coordination system. I thank the leadership in those countries for their commitment and support, without which the Commission would not have been sufficiently effective in achieving its goals. Conversely, the disruption of the presidential electoral process through an unconstitutional change of Government in Guinea-Bissau on 12 April undermined the progress in peacebuilding that had begun to take

place in that country. That and, more important, the violence and instability witnessed in the Central African Republic, underline the fact that the role of the Commission has to be more comprehensive, targeted and well coordinated.

Second, in the absence of broader, more vigorous, dynamic and continuing national commitment, and without coordinated efforts to address the root causes of instability, the role of the Commission may be challenged.

Third, parallel to the Commission's country-specific engagement, the work undertaken by the Commission on policy development in 2012 gave priority to partnership as an area that gives substance and value to the Commission's main functions in sustaining attention, fostering coherence and facilitating resource mobilization for the six countries on its agenda.

The work of the Commission therefore has focused on strengthening its partnership with the World Bank and the African Development Bank. The Commission has taken important steps towards better alignment of national peacebuilding priorities in the countries on the agenda, with the engagement of both banks in those countries, thus ensuring a greater degree of coherence of efforts and sufficient focus on peacebuilding objectives in those countries. Given the nexus between peace and development, the Commission is also pursuing a thematic focus on job creation and rule-of-law assistance, in partnership with the banks and other stakeholders.

Fourth, similarly, the Commission sought to deepen its working relationship with key United Nations actors in the field, especially the regional political leadership and the senior United Nations leadership. An informal dialogue with Executive and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in agenda countries was launched in April 2012. In addition, in September 2012, initiatives were undertaken to forge better relationships with regional groups such as the African Union. That partnership is certainly a crucial one, requiring deeper and continuing commitment and support from the Commission's membership and the top management of United Nations alike.

Fifth, partnership with the principal organs of the United Nations is of no less significance. The report stipulates that members elected from each of the three principal organs need to lead the efforts to deepen and give substance to relations with the Peacebuilding Commission. We held meetings with the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the Secretariat, which is an area in which we expect to make progress in 2013. In 2012, however, in view of the need to strengthen the links with United Nations field missions and to enhance impact in the field, the Commission placed particular emphasis on the relationship with the Security Council, starting with its very meaningful interactive dialogue with members of the Council last summer. In fact, the consideration of the Commission's report on its fifth session last July in the Security Council offered an opportunity to revive the discussion on what the 2010 review described as the potential to create a new dynamic between a more forthcoming Security Council and a better performing PBC.

Suggestions to energize the relations between the two bodies have been followed up, including through the Commission's working group on lessons learned, which last December explored the scope of the Commission's advisory role to the Council on transitions of United Nations missions in countries on the agenda. The Commission has the potential to demonstrate value added by supporting a process of draw-down and withdrawal of United Nations missions that is not only grounded in sound analysis and in country-specific realities and national needs, but which also ensures that the international community remains committed to, and cognizant of, the essential links between peace and socioeconomic development beyond the lifetime of United Nations peacekeeping and political missions.

Sixth, much discussion has taken place around the extent to which the Commission is delivering on the high expectations that accompanied its creation, in 2005. Therefore, 2012 was a year when the question of collective responsibility and commitment of the membership took centre stage in the Commission's deliberations. I must say that, while we collectively managed to instil some sense of urgency in that topic, the task of translating such commitment into concrete actions and contributions remains unfulfilled. To that end, the high-level event on the theme "Peacebuilding: the way towards sustainable peace and security", which was presided over by the Prime Minister of Bangladesh in September 2012, brought together for the first time a number of Heads of State and Government, ministers and senior officials from among the Commission's broader membership. The consensus political declaration that emanated from the event reaffirmed and reinvigorated

the political commitment to key principles, objectives and priorities that the Commission has consistently promoted, both at the policy and at the country-specific levels.

Seventh, the Commission also arranged a session with the Peacebuilding Fund to harmonize the allocation of resources to priority areas.

Finally, the Commission continues to receive direct and substantive support from the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). As the Commission further seeks to strengthen those linkages and to ensure deeper collaboration and synergy with the PBF and other stakeholders, including the philanthropic, civil society, private and business sectors, it is imperative to strengthen the PBSO.

Let me end by stressing the need to envisage a new paradigm for South-South and triangular cooperation, which could reinforce national ownership in peacebuilding through focused support on national capacity development and institution-building in critical peacebuilding priorities, and which is an area that requires further commitment from Member States and the United Nations system at large. The Peacebuilding Commission is uniquely positioned to become a platform for the development of that new paradigm by piloting concrete cooperation projects in the countries on its agenda. The Peacebuilding Commission can certainly facilitate the matching of needs identified by those countries with the most relevant experience and expertise, especially from the global South.

In conclusion, the pace at which the United Nations and the global peacebuilding agenda are evolving testifies to the urgency of the need to address sources of protracted instability and drivers of relapse into conflict. To that end, we can no longer afford to remain in thrall to traditional and business-as-usual approaches to the link between security and socioeconomic development. We shall continue to face systemic challenges, but we must commit to face those challenges with the requisite resolve and determination. We have to take bolder and more courageous steps to ensure sustainable peace and security.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia in his capacity as the current Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): I thank the President for organizing today's important debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on its sixth session (A/67/715) and on the sixth report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711).

At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Momen for his presentation of the PBC report, as well as, once again, for his able stewardship of the Commission in 2012. At the same time, I thank Assistant Secretary-General Judy Cheng-Hopkins for the continuous support she and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) have given to the Peacebuilding Commission.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union later in today's debate. However, I would like to briefly add a few additional comments in my capacity as Chair of the PBC, as well as in my national capacity.

Today's timely debate, which is taking place relatively early in the year, presents us with an opportunity to take stock of the achievements attained and the challenges that emerged during the Commission's work during the past year. At the same time, today's debate opens space for broader strategic discussions on the constantly evolving United Nations peacebuilding agenda and the Commission's crucial role in ensuring that that agenda remains at the centre of the Organization's priorities for the upcoming year. Furthermore, I wish to briefly touch upon the forward-looking part of the 2013 report and reintroduce this year's priorities and the way we intend to implement them. It is our sincere hope that the General Assembly will live up to its role as one of the founders of the PBC and substantially contribute to its work, drawing on its broader policy perspective of the security, political and developmental elements of our common endeavours.

The benefits that the Commission confers — which may sound quite familiar — could be abbreviated with the brand "triple A", that is, attention, accompaniment and advocacy. The three As should be connected and put into practice based on the Commission's comparative advantage in being able to bring together all the relevant stakeholders within the United Nations and beyond. That is precisely why the Commission was established and, in ultima linea, the reason why its membership is drawn from the Organization's three principal organs and from the top financial and troop- and police-contributing countries in the United Nations.

We fully support adopting a new format for the PBC report to give particular emphasis on the results achieved in the main areas of the Commission's

mandate, as well as to the challenges and opportunities in relation to its impact on the ground. In that context, the report includes particularly important detailed references to the relevant country-specific experiences and examples, as well as suggestions for the way ahead.

Let me now turn briefly to the Commission's priorities as established in the concluding part of the annual report, which contains the agenda for action for 2013. As many members will remember, actions adopted in the report were further developed during my inaugural statement. Accordingly, I can be brief now.

First, we all agree that the PBC's role and influence very much depend upon its capability to develop and exploit the sense of collective and individual responsibility and engagement on the part of all members of the Commission. Accordingly, it is our firm intention to re-engage the PBC's main constituencies, encourage a more proactive contribution to the work and objectives of the PBC and further build upon ongoing discussions, with the aim of helping the Commission to finally take on its legitimate role and fully realize its vast potential.

Secondly, with regard to the essential issue of resource mobilization, our intention is to entrench old avenues and explore new ones in order to achieve stronger cohesion among the political, security and developmental components of the Commission's mandate, including through much stronger cooperation with, and the engagement of, the private sector and foundations. As announced, we will continue to explore those topics through thematic discussions on related issues and through direct contacts with the entities I have mentioned, including further engagement with them.

Thirdly, keeping in mind the Commission's crucial policy-coordination role, our intention is to pursue the path of bringing together all the relevant stakeholders, including in particular the international financial institutions, with a view to strengthening relations with them.

Fourthly, in our view, the role of the Commission to which I have referred also includes efforts aimed at a proper understanding of, and rapprochement with, all the other relevant initiatives and processes. Our main goal in that area is to achieve cooperation and synergy in order to improve the situation of populations on the ground and to bring about sustainable peace and economic development in the countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. Eventually, we should be guided in our deliberations and actions by the goal we are trying to achieve, and not be preoccupied by the means at our disposal.

Fifthly, through discussions on the Commission's working methods, our intention is to reach a common understanding aimed at enabling the PBC to conduct its work with a greater degree of predictability. We also seek to help sustain institutional continuity and to enhance its impact at the country-level in practical ways. In that exercise, the PBC's considerable experience in working methods and the important lessons it has learned can contribute to the standardization of approaches to work at the country-level.

It is good to remember that the purpose of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is to take action in post-conflict environments in which Governments and other national stakeholders have demonstrated a strong commitment to peacebuilding. In that regard, it is only logical that more than half of the Fund's activities have been carried out in the countries on the PBC's agenda. As I stated before, we welcome all initiatives and processes aimed at furthering our common peacebuilding goals. In that context, we see the Secretary-General's initiative for civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict as an important contribution to our efforts aimed at national institution-building and at ensuing transformation. Accordingly, we welcome the Peacebuilding Fund's support for that initiative, including its efforts to draw upon expertise from the global South.

We particularly welcome the Fund's activities aimed at the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in peacebuilding, as stipulated in the Secretary-General's earlier reports. We would encourage the Fund to continue efforts to meet the Secretary-General's target of allocating 15 per cent of funds to women's empowerment programmes in the shortest possible time. In that context, we strongly support the Fund's gender-promotion initiative, launched in 2011, in a number of countries, including countries on the PBC's agenda. We look forward with interest to receiving the review of the PBF's progress on the initiative, which has been announced for the second half of 2013.

In accordance with our previously introduced priorities, we strongly encourage the Fund to further undertake activities that can be scaled up or complemented by the African Development Bank and

the World Bank, as well as to consider how the resources of the Peacebuilding Fund may act as a catalyst in supporting the priorities of other relevant processes, including the implementation of the New Deal in some of the countries on the PBC's agenda. At the same time, bearing in mind the fact that United Nations missions in some of the countries on the PBC's agenda are drawing to an end, we look forward to exploring, together with the Peacebuilding Fund, opportunities for supporting the sustainable peacebuilding impact of national institutional activities during any transition of a United Nations presence.

Finally, let me welcome the appointment of a new Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group. I support the themes it has selected to pursue throughout its two-year mandate. We strongly believe that the appropriate consideration of those issues would significantly strengthen internal and external peacebuilding links, be they here at Headquarters, in the capitals or in the field, and improve the efficiency of our engagement.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the Commission is only as strong and functioning as its individual components, that is, its member States and the supporting United Nations system entities and mechanisms. In this critical period in the Commission's life, with the upcoming comprehensive review in 2015 and other important parallel developments, including, in particular, the consideration of the post-2015 development agenda, we should join forces and help the Commission to enhance its added value and to take its rightful place within the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and beyond.

Mr. Khiari (Tunisia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in this joint debate on the annual report (A/67/715) of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the report (A/67/711) of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

I would like, at the outset, to thank the President for organizing this meeting. I also thank His Excellency Mr. Ranko Vilović, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations and Chair of PBC, for his comprehensive statement. Allow me also to extend my sincere thanks to Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, for his introduction of the PBC report and for his dedication and strong commitment to the work of the Commission during its sixth session in order to enhance its impact on the ground. The Movement would like as well to note with appreciation the new format of the PBC report on its sixth session, which provides a comprehensive analysis of the progress made so far in the implementation of the 2010 review's recommendations, as well as of the challenges that the Commission still faces and on the way forward in enhancing its added value.

With its unique membership, the PBC is designed for and well placed to fulfil its objectives in assisting the countries on its agenda by providing sustained attention and political accompaniment and by marshalling adequate resources for post-conflict countries, as well as forging coherence and coordination among actors on the ground. The Movement supports the focus of the Commission in achieving its objectives on the following points. With regard to relations with the principal organs of the United Nations, the Movement underlines the importance of building on the important elements emanating from the Security Council debate (see S/PV.6805) and the informal interactive dialogue of 12 and 13 July 2012, respectively, and of articulating the advice that the Security Council requires from the Commission, including during discussions pertaining to mandates.

Despite those positive developments, further progress is still needed in promoting an institutional relationship between the PBC and the main organs of the United Nations, mainly the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Without prejudice to the functions and powers of the other principal organs of the United Nations in relation to post-conflict peacebuilding, the General Assembly must play a key role in the formulation and the implementation of post-conflict peacebuilding activities. We underline as well the central role of the PBC in the formulation and implementation of such activities and functions. With regard to marshalling resources, we reiterate the necessity of providing the resources required in a timely manner in order to help to ensure predictable financing for recovery activities and sustained financial investment over the medium to long term. We stress as well the need to ensure the sustainability of funding for countries on the agenda of PBC.

In the same connection, we are concerned by the lack of coordination and coherence among financial donors, which results in duplication and redundancy in particular areas and in neglecting other catalytic

projects. Therefore, we call for the setting up of a mechanism within the PBC to review, within each country configuration, the ways and means to ensure the unity of efforts by donors in close collaboration with host countries.

With regard to forging coherence and improving the coordination of actors, the PBC is operating in a crowded field. The respective roles and responsibilities of the PBC and the senior leadership of the United Nations need to be further clarified to enable the Commission meet those crucial functions. The Movement therefore stresses the importance of ensuring follow-up to the May 2012 coordination meeting between the PBC and senior leadership on the ground.

With respect to the work of the PBC's specific configurations, we consider that additional efforts should be deployed to operationalize the principle of national ownership through the adoption of a demand-driven approach based on joint assessments with host countries. Furthermore, we stress the importance of ensuring that the country-specific configurations develop effective and cooperative mechanisms that are based on a sustained dialogue with the host countries under review.

Concerning the working methods of the PBC, the Movement emphasizes that the Commission's provisional rules of procedure need to be revisited regularly in the light of the experience gained by the Commission since its operationalization. The Movement also concurs with the identification of working methods in the annual report of the PBC on its sixth session as a key priority requiring additional progress in 2013 in order to ensure an efficient and proper functioning of the Commission.

On the specific issue of the conduct of the PBC's meetings, the Movement highly commends the delegation of Bangladesh for its initiative in convening the first high-level meeting of the PBC last September, where the declaration entitled "Peacebuilding: the way towards sustainable peace and development" was adopted. The meeting set dates for the activities of the PBC and demonstrated the strong interest of the Commission's entire membership in its work. We look forward as well to a systematic follow-up to that high-level event by demonstrating the relevance of the PBC's work to capital officials, thereby increasing their engagement.

Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund, the total contributions to the Fund significantly increased from $58.1 million in 2011 to $80.5 million in 2012. We thank the Member States that made that valuable contribution, as we also thank the new donors to the Fund. We reiterate as well the importance of increasing the funding target of the PBF, to make it more capable of financing additional projects in post-conflict countries.

The PBF must continue to be geared towards providing critical support during the early stages of the peacebuilding process to avert relapse into conflict. There is an urgent need for closer synergy between the PBC and PBF through a strategic relationship that ensures greater coherence and coordination between the two organs and avoids duplication.

In that regard, we take note of the recommendations and the revised terms of reference of the Peacebuilding Fund as contained in resolution 63/282. We also reaffirm the roles of the General Assembly and the Peacebuilding Commission in providing policy guidance on the use of the Fund in order to maximize its impact in the field and to further increase its impact and improve its functioning; to make the fund more efficient, transparent and flexible; and to facilitate the disbursement of funds, particularly for quick-impact and emergency projects. We stress as well the need for a mechanism to assess whether allocations from the PBF are directed towards the appropriate channels that will lead to peacebuilding.

Let me conclude by reiterating the Movement's assurances of continuing constructive and meaningful engagement in all future peacebuilding activities.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

I thank the President for having convened today's important meeting on the annual report (A/67/715) of the

Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on its sixth session and on the report (A/67/711) of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). This is a good occasion to look back and to take stock of the achievements made over the past 12 months. It is also an opportunity to draw some lessons and to apply them for the future. Indeed, the next two years mark a new juncture for the PBC. Ahead of the upcoming comprehensive five-year review, in 2015, the Commission needs to demonstrate accelerated progress, cohesion in New York and around the world, better cooperation with the international financial institutions and various United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, and concrete impact in the countries on its agenda.

Peacebuilding is a long-term enterprise. It goes beyond short-term crisis management and incorporates longer-term efforts to consolidate stability and build just and effective States by preventing the recurrence of conflict through sustainable socioeconomic and human development and support, which ranges from capacity-building for institutions and civil society, all the way to in-depth structural reforms.

We have learned from our common experience over the past years that no single template can be applied to fluid and complex situations where priority areas span across the areas of peace and security, development, humanitarian needs and human rights. The United Nations system, and the Peacebuilding Commission in particular, has a pivotal role to play in that respect. That is why the European Union has shown a strong commitment and has fully participated in the PBC's work since its establishment. The European Union has also been a member of all country-specific configurations of the PBC since their inception. The European Union is holding an ongoing exchange on how best to continue to support the PBC, specifically in each of its country-specific configurations.

The two annual reports before us today are both comprehensive documents thast illustrate the multifaceted challenges ahead. We appreciate the efforts by the country-specific configurations and the Peacebuilding Support Office team to provide a more analytical assessment of the PBC's work in 2012. That really helps to identify the areas where progress has been made and those where further collective engagement may be needed.

On the upside, we saw a great sense of dynamism within the Liberia configuration, which provided support for the launching of a national reconciliation strategy in the country and has put the issue of the responsible management of natural resources on the agenda. The Burundi configuration played an important role in support of that country's development, in the context of resource mobilization and support for coherence and coordination of international efforts, by supporting the organization of a very successful partners conference in Geneva in October 2012. The progress witnessed thus far on security sector reform in Guinea, notably the retirement of almost 4,000 military personnel with the help of the Peacebuilding Fund, also represents an encouraging step. A joint mission by the Sierra Leone and Liberia configurations underscored the importance and timeliness of regional cooperation among configurations, notably in West Africa and in the context of the Mano River Union.

The efforts to unleash the PBC's full potential need to continue. There are still great challenges ahead. One such challenge is the reformatting of the United Nations presences in Sierra Leone and Burundi, which needs to be closely monitored. Important other test cases are the restoration and respect of the constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau and the organization and holding of long-overdue legislative elections in Guinea. In view of the most recent developments on the ground, it is also obvious that the situation in the Central African Republic deserves our utmost attention. In all those cases, the PBC has a role to play through its convening power and central mandate as an intergovernmental advisory body at the service of the countries on its agenda.

Let us not forget, however, the most important aspect, namely, national ownership. Peacebuilding will succeed only if it is home-grown and nationally led. Our duty as the international community must consist of aligning behind nationally owned strategies. At the same time, our role in political accompaniment is possible only if there is genuine commitment by national authorities to address the root causes of instability. However, it is just as important to ensure the ownership and political will of all the members of the country-specific configurations; otherwise the element of mutual accountability for results in peacebuilding is lost. In that context, we welcome the fact that the role of members of the PBC is given special attention in the 2013 agenda for action.

In times of financial crisis, the PBC should seek alternative ways for resource mobilization, such as

engaging the private sector and forging partnerships with international financial institutions. We look forward to this year's review of the effectiveness of the PBF's global strategy by the Peacebuilding Fund Advisory Group, notably in connection with the development of the next planning cycle of the Fund for the next three years. We also welcome the PBF's intention to continue its efforts in the area of country evaluations and results reporting.

Before concluding, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the former Chair of the PBC, Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen of Bangladesh, whom I would like to thank for his strong and continued commitment.

We also look forward to working hand in hand with the new Chair, Ambassador Ranko Vilović, the PBC membership and the Peacebuilding Support Office to move things forward.

The European Union stands ready to continue to support the efforts to enable the United Nations peacebuilding architecture to live up to the expectations that accompanied its establishment.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): I would like, at the outset, to thank Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen, outgoing Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, for the effort exerted to prepare the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (A/67/715). I wish to also express my appreciation to the current Chair, Ambassador Ranko Vilović, for his comprehensive plan to broaden the scope of the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Egypt aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Tunisia as coordinator of the Non-Aligned Movement caucus on peacebuilding.

The peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations is currently witnessing important developments, most notably the implementation of the exit strategy of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone in the coming 12 months and the transfer of its responsibilities to a United Nations country team. That transition experience represents an opportunity for the Peacebuilding Commission to liaise between the United Nations teams working on the ground in the countries where peacebuilding assignments have been accomplished, on one hand, and the Security Council and the General Assembly, on the other hand; and to take advantage of the experience accumulated by the Commission and its outreach to international partners to prevent those countries from relapsing into conflict.

In April 2012, the peacebuilding architecture witnessed a military coup d'état in Guinea-Bissau. The course of events in that brotherly country ever since has served to emphasize the importance of dealing with the developments in the region at large according to a comprehensive regional perspective that addresses the problems associated with the trafficking in arms, drugs and persons. It is that approach specifically that would add new momentum to the peacebuilding efforts and successes.

Egypt emphasizes the importance of the ongoing efforts to develop the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission to become more effective and responsive to the actual needs of the countries on the ground. In that regard, we wish to reiterate the following elements: the pertinence of national ownership of peacebuilding programmes so that they can be more responsive to the national priorities of each country; the need to consolidate cooperation frameworks with international and regional financial institutions and to search for innovative and sustainable solutions for funding problems facing peacebuilding programmes, in accordance with national priorities; and the need for broader coordination among the Peacebuilding Fund and international partners, especially the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank, as well as United Nations agencies working on the ground, so as to increase the effectiveness of the resources allocated from the Fund.

Egypt stresses the relevance of the recommendations set out in the sixth report of the Peacebuilding Commission, especially with regard to activating the role of the general membership of the Commission, which is selected from a number of the principal organs of the United Nations, in order to enhance communication and coordination between the Peacebuilding Commission and those organs, mainly the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. We also advocate for partnerships to provide sustainable funding for peacebuilding programmes, with a special emphasis on partnerships with international and regional financial institutions.

The ultimate objective of the ongoing process of developing the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission should continue to be to increase the

effectiveness and credibility of the Commission in performing its functions and duties and to further mainstream the efforts exerted in the peacebuilding architecture by building on lessons learned, with a special focus on priority themes related to peacebuilding, such as national reconciliation and achieving sustainable economic development in the countries on the Commission's agenda.

Egypt is working, in full coordination with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Chair of the Organizational Committee, to enhance communication and coordination between the peacebuilding architecture in the United Nations, on the one hand, and the African Union, on the other, to further peacebuilding activities in the six African countries on the agenda of the Commission. In that context, Egypt has proposed establishing an African Union centre for post-conflict reconstruction and development in order to enhance African capabilities in those domains.

Egypt also stresses the importance of having proper coordination between the peacebuilding architecture and the programme to enhance civilian capacities in the aftermath of conflict, given the many crosscutting issues between them, in order to maximize their outcome in the light of the limited resources available within the United Nations, and in the Peacebuilding Fund in particular.

In conclusion, the expertise available to the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund after six successful years of work on the ground represent an important resource that should be fully utilized to achieve a breakthrough in future. Egypt expresses its readiness to coordinate with the Peacebuilding Support Office and members of the Peacebuilding Commission to make peacebuilding programmes and activities a true success story in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I welcome Ambassador Momen's introduction of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on its sixth session (A/67/715). We also welcome the Secretary-General's report (A/67/711) on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

The work of peacebuilding after conflicts will help eliminate the root causes of conflicts and is important for the lasting peace and sustainable development of the countries and regions concerned. As a body within the United Nations system to rebuild after conflicts, the PBC has played an important role by implementing the relevant decisions of the General Assembly and Security Council. We appreciate the achievements of the past year. We also welcome the initiative by Bangladesh in September 2012. At the same time, this type of work is a long-term, complicated and difficult task. We would like to highlight the following points.

First, the PBC and all the relevant parties should respect the sovereignty of the countries concerned. Post-conflict countries must assume the primary peacebuilding responsibilities. In doing its work, the PBC should strengthen its partnership with the country concerned, respect the priorities set by the country and help create a comprehensive development and peacebuilding strategy in accordance with the country's specific situation and needs. During the peacebuilding process, attention should be paid to enhancing capacity-building and personnel training, and the human resources and the country team of experts should be fully utilized so that the work can be done better.

Secondly, attention should be paid to the root causes of conflict, in particular the issues of economic and social development. In the countries concerned, attention should be paid consistently to the issues of political security and development. Issues pertaining to judicial reform and the rule of law should be dealt with only once the economic situation is restored. People can enjoy the benefits of peace only conce political harmony prevails and a stable security situation is maintained so that a solid political basis can be laid.

Thirdly, the PBC should also enhance its coordination and cooperation with major United Nations organs and financial and regional organizations. We hope that the PBC will strengthen its cooperation and coordination with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the African Union and other organizations could also help to promote peacekeeping work and to achieve concrete results.

Fourthly, we call on the PBC to improve its working methods. The Commission should improve its internal work so as to achieve the best possible results. It should also set priorities for its work and strengthen its cooperation with the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and peacekeeping operations so that they are able to help each other and improve their work.

Fifthly, the international community should provide support and assistance swiftly and in a timely manner. We appreciate the role played by the PBF and

we support its work. We hope that its resources can be used to maximal effect. We also appeal to other countries to contribute to the PBF in order to provide more resources. We are seeking more channels for resources.

We consistently support the PBC and PBF and participate actively in their work. We hope they will play an increasing role in the work of peacebuilding. We hope that lasting peace will be achieved and we will continue to contribute actively to that end.

Mrs. Ribeiro Viotti (Brazil): This debate on the annual reports of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is a valuable occasion for us to reflect on the work we undertook last year and on the challenges that lie ahead. I take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen for his leadership as Chair of the PBC in 2012. We also welcome the new Chair of the PBC, Ambassador Ranko Vilović, and pledge our full support to him. I also want to express our appreciation to Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins and her team for the support provided by the Peacebuilding Support Office to the activities of the PBC.

Brazil has actively supported the United Nations peacebuilding architecture since its establishment. As Chair of the Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration and member of the Organizational Committee, we have continuously engaged, and will continue to do so, in serious efforts to bring sustainable peace to countries facing post-conflict challenges.

The PBC and the PBF made important strides in 2012 to improve coordination in the United Nations system, to enhance their partnership with external actors, to foster the development of national capacities and to better mobilize resources to countries emerging from conflict. There is still, however, space for further improvement in those and other areas.

Brazil is pleased to see the efforts of the United Nations system to enhance its coordination and to avoid overlaps. Forging coherence within the United Nations and among international partners is a crucial step towards delivering concrete results on the ground.

If there is one quintessential aspect that defines peacebuilding, in our view, it is the development of national capacities. Peacebuilding activities should be designed first and foremost to strengthen institutions and to allow countries to gradually conceive and implement national policies on their own. As we are all aware, building institutions and nurturing local expertise are indispensable steps in order to enhance national ownership and to allow for stronger public administration.

The mobilization of resources continues to be a key component in peacebuilding efforts in order to ensure that projects are implemented and objectives are met. In the case of Guinea-Bissau, efforts were being made to align partners behind the priorities set with the Guinea-Bissau authorities in various areas. However, the coup d'état last April has neutralized those efforts and undermined the confidence of key international partners. We hope that decisive steps will be taken in Guinea-Bissau to allow for the restoration of international cooperation with the country.

In a broader sense, broadening the pool of partnerships with external actors is vital to ensuring that the PBC and the PBF continue to have a positive impact on the ground. Brazil welcomes the initiatives aimed at developing strategic partnerships with the international financial institutions in support of post-conflict countries.

Let me take this opportunity to commend the work undertaken by the Peacebuilding Fund. As the report (A/67/711) highlights, the record in annual contributions established in 2012 clearly demonstrates the international community's confidence in the Fund. The PBF has proved to be a catalytic tool, kick-starting projects and helping to generate virtuous cycles.

Brazil reiterates the importance of mainstreaming peacebuilding within the United Nations system. It is our hope that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council will have more frequent exchanges of views on the activities of the PBC in 2013.

In the same vein, closer cooperation with the Security Council should also be pursued. Given the many countries with which the Security Council is seized, the PBC represents a useful vehicle for giving greater attention to individual countries in a post-conflict situation. A dialogue between the Security Council and the country-specific configurations on a regular basis and the participation of the Chairs of the configurations in Council debates and consultations are useful tools to deepen that relationship.

Finally, let me reaffirm that the Brazilian Government will continue to play an active role in

strengthening the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. Both the PBC and the PBF have established themselves as important parts of the United Nations and of its network of support for post-conflict countries. We expect that they will continue to develop meaningful work, with a growing impact in the field. Brazil remains committed to that objective and to that process.

Mr. Yamazaki (Japan): At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to express Japan's gratitude to Ambassador Momen, former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for his stewardship over the past year. We also reiterate our desire to work together with Ambassador Vilović, Chair of the Commission for 2013. Today's debate provides an important opportunity to reflect on the work of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture over the past year and to outline steps going forward.

Japan welcomes the analytical approach taken in the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (A/67/715). By structuring it around themes rather than configurations, the report links the different work undertaken by the various configurations and outlines common challenges and opportunities. Our delegation believes that the PBC has the ability to analyse the effectiveness of its engagement and to flexibly adjust it in accordance with the needs on the ground. Continuous improvements must be sought to ensure the relevance of the PBC. In that context, our delegation would like to emphasize the following three points:

First, the PBC needs to find tangible areas in which it can provide added value. The relationship between the PBC and the Security Council is one area where we saw progress last year. Building on the discussions at the Security Council open debate (see S/PV.6805) and the informal interactive dialogue in July last year, Japan, as Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, organized a meeting in November on the topic of the transition of United Nations missions in PBC agenda countries in order to identify areas where the two bodies can substantively cooperate. With the transition of United Nations missions in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Burundi under way as we speak, it is paramount for the Council and the country-specific configuration Chairs to work closely together this year.

Secondly, the PBC must get the actors in the field more involved. The Commission has often underscored the need to generate a greater impact in the field, yet struggled to find good ways to do so. The initiative to hold meetings between the Chairs Group and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, which started last year, is welcome in that regard and should be continued. In the same vein, we must look for flexible ways to further involve Embassy personnel covering the agenda country in the daily work of the PBC, including through their participation in field visits. They are a valuable source of expertise in the peacebuilding process, as they are often already working in the country with the responsibility for development assistance implementation.

Thirdly, closely related to the second point, the PBC needs to realign its meetings around country-specific configurations in order to generate an impact on the ground. The work of the PBC Organizational Committee and the Working Group on Lessons Learned should be organized in close coordination with that of the country-specific configurations. Meanwhile, the country-specific configurations should try to outline follow-up actions that could be taken back by Member States of those configurations for consideration. With the 2015 review just around the corner, it is crucial that the PBC step up its work to make 2013 a different year.

The report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711) captures well the progress made and the improved performance of the Fund last year. My delegation highly appreciates the diligent work of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO). Key achievements include increasing donor contributions, swift decision-making, the steady and appropriate implementation of projects and performance improvements in many areas, such as security sector reform and the rule of law, as well as the greater attention given to countries on the PBC agenda.

The function of the Joint Steering Committee is crucial to enhancing the ownership and national commitment of recipient countries, as well as to implementing the projects of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) successfully.

The coordination with other developing partners also needs to be enhanced. The catalytic nature of the PBF would be further enhanced if we could improve its strategic position by strengthening dialogue and cooperation with the relevant partners on the ground.

We should also note that an upcoming comprehensive review of the PBF will provide an

excellent opportunity for us to identify clear priorities, necessary improvements and remaining challenges. Looking ahead to a new planning cycle beyond 2013, the PBF's effectiveness and catalytic role will continue to be of importance.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Japan's strong commitment to peacebuilding and to the activities of the PBC. Peacebuilding is the key to making peace and development happen simultaneously. We would also like to reiterate the importance of a field- and people-centric approach to peacebuilding. We look forward to good work being undertaken in the PBC, as well as to the wise use of the PBF — all of which requires the capable and sensible support provided by the PBSO in 2013.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg fully associates itself fully with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

Allow me to congratulate and thank Ambassador Abdul Momen for his very dynamic leadership of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2012. I also commend Ambassador Ranko Vilović on assuming his responsibilities as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in 2013 and I wish him every success.

This is a good time to take stock, given that we are midway between the 2010 and 2015 reviews of the peacebuilding framework. The future programme of work, which has already been taken up by the new Organizational Committee, is full of specific activities that can make the PBC actions more relevant.

The new peacebuilding architecture, established by the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and more specifically by General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), is based on three pillars, namely, the Commission's intergovernmental cooperation, the practical support of the Secretariat provided by the Peacebuilding Support Office, and the financing of the Peacebuilding Fund, which serves as a catalyst. It is up to us, the Member States, to provide that system with the resources to carry out its work and the chance to prove itself, including by committing ourselves fully to the specific configurations. For its part, the Peacebuilding Support Office should help to strengthen its position in the institutional architecture of the United Nations by making full use of the resources available to it, in particular to strengthen support for the country configurations on the agenda.

With regard to the report (A/67/715) before us, we must acknowledge the limits of that architecture as it seeks to better use what is available to it. The Commission is not an operational entity, but rather a policy body. It is not in the field; it is based in New York. It does not really have its own funds, but it can call on the resources from a vast range of partners. The Commission draws its legitimacy primarily from its political accompaniment, the support for the mobilization of resources and the involvement of international partners at the request of countries on the agenda. The PBC is an intergovernmental advisory platform that can give considerable political weight to the work of the operational bodies of the United Nations system.

The work of the Guinea configuration, which I have the honour of presiding over, has focused, during its second year, on the implementation of mutual peacebuilding commitments agreed between the Government and the 50 odd members of the configuration in September 2011. Efforts towards national reconciliation — one of the three priorities identified for the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission in Guinea — were put into question by discussions about the organization and the deferment of the legislative elections until 2013 and by an overwhelming feeling of distrust. Political dialogue seems to have won the upper hand now. The Government, the Independent National Electoral Commission and the political parties are together seeking ways out of the deadlock. Once the parties involved have agreed on modalities for the elections and the Independent National Electoral Commission has presented a new time frame, the President will be able to hold the elections. Currently, the international community and members of the Guinea configuration must be ready to rise to the occasion to actively support the preparation and holding of the elections.

Guinea reached some important milestones in its development during 2012 by the reaching the completion point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and by the signing an agreement on access to funds from the tenth European Development Fund. International partners must now offer a new ambitious framework for poverty reduction so that the people of Guinea can quickly reap the dividends of peace and sustainable development. Efforts to reform the security and defence sectors have increased and are

being allocated more funds, with the encouragement by the country's President.

Many of the challenges facing Guinea are common to peacebuilding throughout the subregion, such as youth unemployment, public administration reform, security sector reform, organized transnational crime and economic integration. The three country configurations of the PBC, including three members of the Mano River Union, namely, the configurations of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, have also begun an exchange with the Secretary-General of that organization to identify priorities and themes that could be dealt with collectively at the regional level.

Luxembourg will remain actively committed to the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, whether it be as Chair of the Guinea configuration, as a member of the Guinea-Bissau configuration or as a financial partner of the Peacebuilding Fund, to which we will once again contribute approximately $520,000 in 2013. We will also remain involved in the Security Council to maximize the positive interaction between the Council and the PBC, in particular its country-specific configurations. In that regard, I continue to believe that the configurations have a valuable contribution to make to the work of the Council, including at the level of closed consultations.

Mr. Khan (Indonesia): Let me begin by thanking Ambassador Vilović for introducing the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) annual report (A/67/715). I wish to also express my deep appreciation to the previous PBC Chair, Ambassador Momen, along with the present, as well as previous, Chairs of the six country-specific configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned, for their very valuable work.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement made by the representataive of Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement caucus of the PBC. We also thank Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support Judy Cheng-Hopkins for her leadership and her work, together with her able Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) team, in supporting the Commission's work and administering the Peacebuilding Fund.

Indonesia welcomes the 2012 PBC annual report, which outlines many important developments and achievements by the PBC and its mechanism during the year. We congratulate all PBC members, as well as other stakeholders, especially from the Governments and civil societies of the six countries on its agenda, whose tackling of challenges and successes have been essential to the conclusions of the report before us.

While there remain many persistent as well as emerging challenges, the PBC continues to make progress as a unique global platform, garnering political and financial resources with the collaboration of an expanding array of actors. The Commission does not possess its own financing, and its decisions are not binding. Yet, its gradual but concrete achievements with regard to the countries on its agenda and its sharpened focus on key global post-conflict themes over the past six years are a testament both to the drive of its members and the support from the United Nations system and its partners. That backing, particularly from the Security Council and the General Assembly, is critical for the Commission in undertaking its mandates. We hope that it will be further strengthened.

From providing support — inter alia, for the launching of a national conciliation strategy in Liberia to the successful holding of elections in Sierra Leone and support for resource mobilization to reinforce the new poverty reduction strategy in Burundi — the PBC's impact on the ground has improved in the past year. However, we concur with the observation in the 2012 report that, without broader, more vigorous and continued national commitment and leadership, as well as efforts to address the root causes of instability, the Commission's political accompaniment will be rendered ineffective. In that regard, we underline the imperative for well-supported, nationally owned and comprehensive peacebuilding. With that in mind, allow me to share the following points.

First, Indonesia will steadfastly support the PBC in continuing to implement its road map of actions, especially the strengthening of partnerships both for marshalling resources and for capacity-building. In that context, we support the conclusions of the Working Group on Lessons Learned that the PBC could identify a few influential foundations and private companies in areas of recurring priorities in the countries on its agenda and engage with them. The Burundi partners conference, for example, provided some recent positive examples. The PBC policy task force on engagement with the private sector, which was facilitated by our delegation in 2008, came up with some recommendations that we believe could be very useful in forging collaboration with philanthropic organizations and companies.

We also concur with the report that, drawing on country-specific experience, the PBC, together with actors such as the World Bank and the United Nations in-country presence, could identify specific examples of collaboration that could be scaled up and broadened.

We believe that, in addition to fostering the sharing of countries' experiences and lessons, the PBC should also advance discussions on how capacity-building can be better enabled for the six countries on its agenda that need it with practical models of engagement under the United Nations civilian capacity's initiative. Through South-South and triangular cooperation, such projects, implemented in collaboration with the Steering Committee, would also help to assess the review outcomes and to further build on them.

Secondly, the PBC's call for greater integration among the peacebuilding and development objectives in the instruments of engagement among the different United Nations and non-United Nations actors is very important. The leveraging of efforts would improve coherence, resource allocation and results. It would also simplify reporting and other procedural work for the national authorities of post-conflict countries. It would help to strengthen national ownership and better align external support with national priorities for peacebuilding and development.

Thirdly, the 2010 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture noted a lack of strong political support from capitals as one of the reasons for a less effective impact of the PBC in the field. We welcome the first PBC high-level event last year on the topic "Peacebuilding: the way towards sustainable peace and security", organized under Bangladesh's leadership. More institutionalized and regular annual sessions of the Organizational Committee would serve to bolster support and coordination with capitals, thereby enhancing the Commission's work.

Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711), I would first like to commend the PBSO, as the Fund's administrator, on improving the performance of the Fund's activities and on deepening the Fund's interface with the PBC. We support the Fund's two priority settings, namely, in immediate post-conflict or post-political crisis environments and in countries where it can make longer-term grants. We note that the countries on the PBC's agenda received 40 per cent of the Fund's 2012 allocation. While we are mindful of the factors behind that allocation mentioned in the report, we want to stress that it is vital that the Fund prioritize countries on the agenda of the PBC, as stated by the Secretary-General in the report.

Apart from South-South and triangular cooperation, particularly in support of the civilian capacities of the global South and those countries with a similar experience of transition, we wish to reiterate the importance of exploring the potential of the role of the Peacebuilding Fund in assisting national authorities at their request

In conclusion, Indonesia underlines the importance of a comprehensive and properly supported approach to mitigating conflicts. For our part, we are determined to continue our contribution to further the efforts of the PBC and the PBF to build lasting peace.

Mr. Okafor (Nigeria): Today's debate provides an opportunity to review the performance of the pillars of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. In particular, it offers a unique opportunity for Member States to assess the progress in, and the challenges to, our collective efforts to support and sustain peace and socioeconomic development in countries emerging from conflict.

On behalf of my delegation, I wish to thank the President for convening this important joint debate on the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/67/715) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711). I wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Ranko Vilović, Permanent Representative of Croatia and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for his statement. It provides some critical perspectives on the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission. Allow me also to sincerely thank Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh and former Chair of the PBC, for his able and committed leadership during his tenure.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Chairs of the various country-specific configurations and to the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) for their tireless efforts in supporting the work of the PBC in countries emerging from conflict. Indeed, the staff of the PBSO has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to the United Nations peacebuilding agenda.

While Nigeria associates itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Group, delivered earlier this morning by Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations, we would like to underscore a few other issues of interest.

The recent developments in two countries on the PBC's agenda give cause for deep concern. Such developments underscore the fact that peacebuilding is not a linear and progressive process. It is a multifaceted and all- encompassing initiative that must also proactively focus on engendering sustainable peace. Against that backdrop, I would like to underline the following points.

First, when Nigeria convened the open debate on preventive diplomacy at the Security Council in July 2010 (see S/PV.6360), we were motivated by a profound concern that the nature of conflict was outpacing our collective ability to respond effectively.

After seven years of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture's existence, post-conflict peacebuilding remains a fragile undertaking. While peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict is indeed necessary, it cannot be an effective long-term strategy or a solution. Global foresight through timely intervention before a simmering crisis erupts into a conflict is a crucial peacebuilding strategy. For instance, the international community's support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts for two of the countries on the PBC agenda, which currently face serious political difficulties, has been less than sufficiently robust. Without an enhanced commitment on the part of members of the Commission to providing adequate financial, technical and institutional support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and associated political processes in those countries, the risk of relapse will remain high.

Secondly, there is a growing recognition that enhanced institutional capacity is central to fostering national ownership of peacebuilding efforts. Therefore, the PBC must ensure that its engagement with the countries on the agenda results in strengthening the capacity of those countries to undertake the tasks of peacebuilding.

Thirdly, we believe that members of the PBC have an individual and collective responsibility to support countries on the agenda. Such expressions of support must move beyond mere proclamations to specific action. It must be reflected in results-oriented, concrete contributions to the countries on the agenda. Those countries are on the agenda because they need international support, as well as assistance from their regional and subregional organizations. Such support should be reflected in financial contributions or sharing experiences. The overarching aim of the PBC should be to reflect on how to best systematically utilize all the accumulated lessons learned in dealing with peacebuiling in the countries on its agenda. Nigeria today offers its expertise through its Technical Aid Corps, which is a framework for South-South cooperation to support the countries on the PBC agenda for their civilian capacity-building needs.

Fourthly, the PBC should intensify its efforts to strengthen interinstitutional cooperation and partnership with all relevant stakeholders, including the principal organs of the United Nations. In that connection, Nigeria welcomes Security Council resolution 2086 (2013), which highlights the importance of the advisory, advocacy and resource mobilization roles of the PBC in peacebuilding activities, as well as in advancing a coherent approach to multidimensional peacekeeping mandates. Forging coherence and complementarities of action, as well as improving the coordination of actors, would help to reduce the overlap and duplication of efforts. It would also ensure greater clarity of responsibility and accountability.

There can be no meaningful peacebuilding without funding. That is why we attach great importance to the work of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the PBF in 2012 (A/67/711) reveals that, in spite of the global recession, the Fund witnessed an increase in contributions from $58.1 million in 2011 to $80.5 million in 2012. It is also encouraging to note that the Peacebuilding Fund is maturing and has developed a rich set of experiences. We commend Member States and other donors for their financial contributions.

For its part, Nigeria has made a significant contribution to the pursuit and sustenance of peace and security within the West African subregion and the Sahel at both the bilateral and the regional levels. Nigeria is supporting the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States to bring stability and constitutional order to Guinea-Bissau, Mali and other conflict-afflicted countries in Africa. Those efforts have taken the forms of financial, material, as well as troop contributions.

I wish to reiterate Nigeria's commitment to the United Nations peacebuilding process. As a member of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and all the country-specific configurations of the PBC, as well as one of the leading contributors of troops to the United Nations peacekeeping missions, Nigeria has a vital stake in successful peacebuilding efforts. Today, we reiterate that abiding commitment.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): At the outset, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to you, Sir, for convening this annual debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (A/67/715) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711). I thank Ambassador Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, for presenting the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session. I would also take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Ranko Vilović, Permanent Representative of the Republic Croatia and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, for the statement he delivered. At this juncture, my delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegation commends the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund for the reports submitted for the deliberation of the General Assembly. The two reports have been invaluable in underscoring the important work of the Commission and the Fund. Malaysia takes note of the reports and their findings and conclusions, which will be the basis of our deliberations today.

The Peacebuilding Commission was established to prevent countries emerging from conflict from relapsing into conflict. As an intergovernmental advisory body entrusted to coordinate and integrate approaches on post-conflict peacebuilding measures, the Commission has continued to play an important role in assisting such countries in navigating that perilous journey.

Malaysia shares the views reflected in the report, especially on the importance of developing national capacity and resource mobilization as key principles to a successful peacebuilding initiative. Without national capacity there can be no governance, and without resources there can be no development. We support the continued efforts of the Commission in mobilizing international support and interests from various players, including the World Bank and the African Development Bank in that endeavour.

The report outlines various progress and developments in the six country-specific configurations under its agenda. My delegation is especially encouraged by developments in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Burundi. We believe that the progress in those countries is a testimony to the legitimacy of the strategy of the Commission in its work and the strong cooperation between the PBC and the Governments of those countries. Nevertheless, we believe that efforts should continue towards achieving sustainable peace, stability and development. At the same time, my delegation is of the view that the Commission should intensify efforts in supporting the remaining countries under its agenda from relapsing into conflict.

Malaysia is not new in supporting the development and progress of developing countries and countries emerging from conflict. We have continued to demonstrate our commitment in the development of human capital and governance through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme. Officials from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic have benefitted from the Programme. Through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, Malaysia has trained a total of 163 officials from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau in various programmes, including capacity-building programmes, public administration, agricultural management, diplomacy and customs and law enforcement.

There is no doubt that the work of the Commission must continue and be enhanced. The Commission's advisory role on peacebuilding matters with United Nations organs, particularly the Security Council, must continue to be strengthened. Malaysia commends the progress made in enhancing relations between the Commission and the Security Council. We encourage further consultations and discussions between the two organs to support peacebuilding programmes in the countries under the Commission's agenda.

While the progress in our work, as reflected in the report, has been a welcome development, Malaysia is of the opinion that coherence and coordination between the Commission and the various United Nations entities at the field level must continue to be enhanced. My delegation is of the view that such coordination in the field is important, as most of the Commission's work and assistance take effect at the field level.

Malaysia takes note of the developments in the working methods of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission. Reform of the working methods of the Commission would ensure efficiency, credibility and continuity to future generations. My delegation is of the view that developments in the working methods of the Commission must continue to be updated so as to ensure coherent policy development and transparency and cultivate institutional memory that would further strengthen the Commission.

Malaysia also takes note of the relationship between the Peacebuilding Commission and the concept of civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict. That synergy can be further explored in gauging expertise from countries that have emerged from conflict in order to endow the Commission with experience and knowledge. While taking note of that important development, my delegation is of the view that cooperation and collaboration between the two sides should be more specific and centred on important thematic issues such as economic revitalization, the development of governance and national reconciliation.

My delegation underscores the fact that resource mobilization is a key element in supporting countries in a transition towards peace. In this regard, Malaysia takes note of the Secretary-General's report on the Peacebuilding Fund. We are encouraged by the increased contribution of $80.5 million in 2012. That demonstrates a widespread belief and trust in the Fund on the part of Member States and donor entities in supporting the peacebuilding agenda of the United Nations.

Malaysia will continue to place our trust in the Peacebuilding Fund to support the Commission in its work in the six countries on its agenda. Apart from the six countries on its agenda, Malaysia takes note that the Fund has supported 19 other countries and 19 United Nations agencies in various programmes that support peace and stability.

While the Fund has contributed to the work of the Commission and various other countries and United Nations agencies, Malaysia would like to underline that more Member States and international donors must contribute to the Fund. At the same time, Malaysia would also like to echo the call for transparency and accountability in the disbursements of the Fund by ensuring that best practices are inculcated in the management of the Fund.

Peacebuilding requires the cooperation and coordination of all key players, both international and from the host country. The Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund have continued to play this important role of enabling nations in duress to stabilise and prosper. We should continue to support the Commission and the Fund in this noble endeavour. It is Malaysia's aspiration to see greater commitment from Member States and international players to supporting sustainable peace and stability through the work of the Commission. Malaysia stands ready and looks forward to working closely with all its members in support of peacebuilding.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Ambassador Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission for 2012, for having presented the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its sixth session (A/67/715). We would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Ambassador Ranko Vilović, current Chair of the Commission, for his statement, and we wish him every success in his work this year.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We welcome the new format for presenting the report of the Peacebuilding Commission, in accordance with the recommendations resulting from the 2010 review. The report places greater emphasis on the progress achieved by the Commission, the opportunities and challenges ahead, and ways to enhance the impact of its support. It also contains a broad-ranging analysis of the implementation of the recommendations of the 2010 review, which offers a clearer vision for the direction to be taken.

As a country that overcame its own internal conflict in 1996, we value the support of the international community to peacebuilding. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, and in particular the country-specific configurations, was useful in mobilizing such cooperation. In addition, their activities over the past six years have also been an important source of lessons learned in the specific and varied situations.

We recognize the work carried out by the country-specific configurations, which represent a genuine nexus between the concept of peacebuilding and its

application to situations on the ground. In this respect, as highlighted in the report, we stress the importance for the national stakeholders in the respective countries to demonstrate leadership and firm commitment in order to ensure that the support provided by the Commission has the desired impact.

Concerning the main functions that we have identified for the Commission — resource mobilization, political support and the promotion of coordination — allow us to make the following observations.

We are pleased to note that the Commission has continued to enhance its resource mobilization efforts, identifying gaps and the relevant stakeholders and programmes to be mobilized. We recognize that the interruption of constitutional order has a negative effect on the mobilization of resources, and we agree that there is a need to continue to support the countries on the agenda to create national systems that help to attract sustainable financial and technical support.

We welcome the Commission's readiness to pay attention and provide political support to countries on its agenda, in addition to the support provided by other entities, supporting for example Governments in shouldering new responsibilities that arise due to the change in the nature of the United Nations presence in the country, as will be the case in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

We reiterate the need for the Commission use its political influence to promote the necessary coordination within the international community on the ground by enhancing the support of the various stakeholders to the peacebuilding strategies and priorities established at the national level. The progress achieved under the Commission's initiatives to improve coordination at the country level should help the Commission to promote the creation of transparent mechanisms that bolster that coordination and national involvement.

We recognize in particular the great usefulness of the Peacebuilding Fund, and we are pleased to confirm that total contributions to the Fund increased significantly in 2012. We hope that the Fund will continue to receive the sustained support it needs to fulfil its functions.

Guatemala shares the Commission's commitment to the search for lasting development and peace in countries emerging from conflict, and recognizes the value of the relationship between the Security Council and the Commission in better addressing conflicts and other situations in the countries on its agenda. We will continue to support the work of the Commission as a mechanism to meet the specific needs of countries emerging from conflict.

Mr. Touray (Sierra Leone): Allow me to thank the Secretary-General and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for the instructive and forward-looking report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/67/711) and the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/67/715), presented as mandated by General Assembly resolutions 63/282 and 60/180, respectively. Sierra Leone warmly welcomes both reports, which, inter alia, accurately reflect the programmes and activities of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in Sierra Leone during the reporting period.

Let me also thank the outgoing Chair of the PBC, the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, for presenting the report of the PBC, for steering the work of the Commission in an exemplary manner during his tenure, and for his support for the work of the Chair and members of the Sierra Leone configuration. In a similar vein, I would like to join other delegations in welcoming the new Chair of the PBC, Mr. Ranko Vilović, Permanent Representative of Croatia, and assure him of Sierra Leone's support.

We acknowledge the effort made by the PBC in taking forward the recommendations of the 2010 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture (A/64/868), in particular the initiation of activities by the Commission on a path towards strengthening its impact and demonstrating value added, both in the field and as a policy platform for the normative development of the peacebuilding discourse in the United Nations and beyond. In that regard, we note the efforts of the Commission in strengthening its relationship with operational entities of the United Nations, especially the senior United Nations leadership in countries on the agenda of the Commission, the Chairs Group and the international financial institutions, and more importantly, its efforts aimed at strengthening linkages with the principal organs of the United Nations. We encourage the Commission to continue interacting with the World Bank, the African Development Bank, regional organizations and operational actors of the United Nations system to strengthen partnership and alignment of activities. That is of crucial importance,

as it has the potential to strengthen the Commission's political advocacy, resource mobilization and efforts to address transnational organized crime and drug trafficking.

We urge the Commission to continue building on its contributions to the work of the Senior Advisory Group, particularly in the area of improving the United Nations contribution to the strengthening of national capacities for peacebuilding. The fundamental principle of national ownership and the importance of supporting national civilian capacity development and institution-building will no doubt broaden and deepen the pool of civilian expertise for peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict. In that regard, the Commission should monitor and make recommendations on the implementation of the Secretary-General's civilian capacity initiative and assess its practical implications for national capacity-building in critical peacebuilding priority areas.

It is clearly important to emphasize that countries emerging from conflict need an institution like the PBC that will serve as a platform of support, providing them with advice, raising their profile internationally, building trust and dialogue among the various national stakeholders, and mobilizing financial resources for immediate and long-term peacebuilding priorities. In that regard, the PBC should incorporate the findings of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, as well as inputs from expressed views of Member States on the need to develop a field-centric approach and ensuring timely and predictable financing of peacebuilding activities over the medium- to long-term.

We acknowledge and appreciate the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), which remains critical to the Commission's efficient functioning through the provision of assistance in the development of the instruments of engagement, the assessment of progress towards commitments made therein, or the unblocking of obstacles and identification of opportunities for resource mobilization.

Sierra Leone's engagement with both the PBC and the PBF has been quite fruitful. As underscored in both reports, the Commission has, through the relentless efforts of the Sierra Leone configuration, the PBF and donors and development partners, seen tremendous progress in our peacebuilding efforts. Those achievements range from support to our democratic and good governance institutions to aligning the peacebuilding elements of our development framework with the joint vision of the United Nations country team, resource mobilization efforts and political accompaniment.

The successful conduct of elections in 2012 amply exemplified those achievements. In that regard, we commend the PBF, the PBC and development partners and donors for their valuable contributions towards the conduct of successful elections in November 2012. The process was exceptionally peaceful, technically well organized, and characterized by a high voter turnout. It demonstrated the growing capacity of Sierra Leone's national institutions and marked the crossing of a significant peacebuilding threshold. That could not have been easily achieved without the accompaniment of the PBC or support from the PBF, key development partners and donor countries.

Going forward, Sierra Leone is in the midst of articulating its priorities for the next five years. In that regard, Sierra Leone's emerging priorities for the Agenda for Prosperity reflect the much-desired shift in emphasis towards fostering economic growth, improving social services and building human capital. To that end, and by way of building on the Agenda for Change, we are developing a strategy to address our next priority development challenges. We therefore urge members of the Sierra Leone PBC configuration, the PBC membership in general, the PBSO and development partners as well as donors, to support our development aspirations, including the seamless transition to a strong and well-resourced resident coordinator system.

The Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration, Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski of Canada, visited Sierra Leone in February this year, and his report and briefing of the configuration underscore progress made in addressing key peacebuilding priorities and the need for enduring support, particularly in the area of youth unemployment and empowerment, security sector reform, support for the proposed constitutional review process, management of natural resources, the stemming of drug trafficking and transnational organized crime through a coordinated subregional approach, and the need for strong private sector growth that could translate into a more tangible peace dividend and sustainable peace consolidation.

We are convinced that the composition of the delegation demonstrates the PBC's continued determination to sustain international support for

Sierra Leone. Let me at this juncture express Sierra Leone's unreserved gratitude to the Chair and members of the Sierra Leone configuration for their unflinching commitment to achieving Sierra Leone's peacebuilding and development transformation goals.

We believe that the Chair's visit, as has always been the case, was quite rewarding. Sierra Leone looks forward to more regular visits as they provide an important platform for all actors and stakeholders to speak out on achievements as well as challenges. The arrival of the mission soon after the recent United Nations technical assessment mission also presented the opportunity for an informed consideration of the transition process from the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone to a resident coordinator system.

In conclusion, as one of the first countries on the PBC's agenda, Sierra Leone has charted a path for others to potentially learn from. This has involved adjusting early approaches in order to make more effective use of PBF resources, lower the bureaucratic burden placed on Governments, and better align with national priorities. It has also entailed a shift in perspective away from heavy field-level engagements with an operational focus to a more political role that concentrates on how the PBC can serve as an international platform for advocacy and action on all aspects of peacebuilding.

However, despite those achievements, several outstanding issues will require effort over the longer term. Evidently, now is the time for the international community to pay greater attention to Sierra Leone by providing the required continued assistance to build on the gains achieved to date. Similarly, there is a need for a measured transition that takes into account the filling of critical gaps that might occur during and after the transition process. Above all, the pace of transition should match needs on the ground, especially given the potential for small investments at this stage to make a substantial contribution to consolidating hard-won peace. In that context, we welcome the remarks by Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski, Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration, on the need for the configuration to turn its attention to supporting the transition process, including by advocating for any necessary resources to fill gaps created by the drawdown.

Finally, we emphasize the need for the PBC to align its engagement with the Government of Sierra Leone's new priorities articulated in the eight pillars of the Agenda for Prosperity.

Mr. Guerber (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland welcomes the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on the work of its sixth session (A/67/715). We particularly welcome the analytical approach of the report, which is structured according to the main recommendations of the 2010 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. Using concrete examples drawn from the six country-specific configurations of the Commission, the report identifies the key challenges and opportunities for the PBC.

To avoid a repetition of the main points of the report, with which we entirely concur, I shall limit my statement to three points, in particular on the basis of our experience as Chair of the Burundi configuration of the PBC. Generally speaking, we believe that peacebuilding actors could play a more central and strategic role in the overall architecture of the United Nations. This is particularly true not only for the PBC as an intergovernmental advisory body, but also for the Peacebuilding Support Office.

First, the efforts of the PBC should focus on the actual impact on the ground and thus the work of the six country-specific configurations. The establishment and strengthening of partnerships with stakeholders within the United Nations system and other actors, such as international financial institutions, are crucial in this regard and deserve continued consideration. Links with the private sector should also be explored further. However, merely establishing partnerships is not enough. Ensuring the coordination and consistency of reciprocal efforts is key to their success. The positive results of the Burundi development partners' conference, held in October 2012 in Geneva, showed us how well-managed partnerships can make a difference.

Secondly, the question of the transition away from United Nations missions and the role of the Commission in this process needs to be better understood. Three of the six configurations of the PBC — those for Burundi, Sierra Leone and Liberia — have achieved decisive milestones in this regard. We welcome the preliminary discussions in the Commission's Working Group, and hope to continue and expand this important debate in order to better define the value added of the PBC in transition processes. Those discussions should ideally be carried out in close collaboration with the Security

Council, which has the final say on the completion of United Nations missions.

Thirdly, and more generally, we are of the opinion that the PBC must better promote its role as the main forum for exchanges on peacebuilding at the United Nations, given its unique composition, which brings together all the relevant major United Nations groups. We are, for example, very much in favour of including issues related to peacebuilding in the development programme for the post-2015 period. Thus, a debate that is focused on those aspects could be held in the PBC.

However, the Commission should not simply address United Nations processes. The potential of the Busan process of the Group of Seven Plus and the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States should also be explored and discussed within the PBC. After all, the six countries on the agenda of the Commission have signed on to the New Deal.

Before I conclude, allow me to say a few words about the Peacebuilding Fund, as the report on the Fund (A/67/711) is also under consideration this morning. We welcome the valuable contribution of the Fund to the promotion of peacebuilding, and we especially welcome the announcement by the Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, that a third financial tranche will be assigned to Burundi. We also encourage efforts to better coordinate the Fund with similar instruments of the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme.

To conclude, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Ambassador Momen of Bangladesh, former Chair of the PBC, under whom this report was written; the staff of the Peacebuilding Support Office; and Assistant Secretary-General Ms. Cheng-Hopkins and her team for their valuable efforts.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): At the outset, let me express gratitude to the former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Momen of Bangladesh, for his informative presentation of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) report on its sixth session (A/67/715), and to the current PBC Chair, Ambassador Vilović of Croatia, for his comprehensive statement. My delegation fully supports the priorities outlined by PBC Chair Ranko Vilović.

While Ukraine aligns itself with the statement by the representative of the European Union, I would like to make a few points in my national capacity.

In our view, the PBC report before us today, which contains a valuable analytical component, duly captures important manifestations of the Commission's added value and its comparative advantages. In particular, my delegation welcomes PBC support for the successful conduct of elections in Sierra Leone, the launching of a national reconciliation strategy in Liberia and resource mobilization in support of a new poverty reduction strategy in Burundi. At the same time, we agree with one of the conclusions that the unique membership structure of the Commission and its nature as a political platform made up of the most influential global actors has yet to be realized.

Going forward, our priority should remain the implementation of the outcome of the 2010 review in order to further boost PBC relevance, performance and impact on the ground. This, in our view, should include sharpening the Commission's analytical profile and enhancing its interaction and closer cooperation with the Security Council. The PBC must also give due and comprehensive consideration to situations where two countries on its agenda have experienced a disruption of their constitutional order, thus undermining the progress in peacebuilding. A leading role in that exercise can be played by the relevant country-specific configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

We fully share the conviction that only a more relevant, more flexible, better performing, better supported, more ambitious and better understood PBC will make a difference on the ground. In this respect, my delegation looks forward to the early implementation of the innovative agenda going forward that concludes the Commission's report.

Peacebuilding is one of the pillars of Ukraine's multidimensional contribution to United Nations activity in the area of international peace and security. In this regard, we understood our membership in the PBC Organizational Committee in 2011 and 2012 as a privilege and a responsibility in equal measure. Among the highlights of Ukraine's first experience in the Commission was our vice-chairmanship of the Organizational Committee in 2011 and active involvement in the Chair's group; participation in the first-ever field visits of the inclusive PBC delegations

to Guinea and Liberia; and contribution to the activities of the steering group of the Liberia configuration.

We are also glad to have been able to contribute substantially to a number of areas that are important for increasing the added value of the PBC. Particular attention was paid to the strengthening of the Commission's thematic edge in terms of such crosscutting issues as women's participation in peacebuilding, gender mainstreaming, children and youth in peacebuilding and the peacekeeping and peacebuilding nexus, as well as to its institutional consolidation and more robust interaction with the relevant United Nations organs. Here, the first-ever joint PBC/UN-Women high-level event comes to mind.

I would do injustice to Ukrainian peacekeepers if I did not mention that my country's contribution to the United Nations peacebuilding endeavour has also been channelled through its active military, police and civilian engagement in over 20 missions under the auspices of the United Nations. As a practical follow-up to our first membership in the PBC in general and its Liberia configuration in particular, Ukraine intends to send a new generation of the formed police unit to the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

We will do our best to further advance the United Nations peacebuilding agenda and strengthen the impact of the PBC in post-conflict and fragile societies. It is against that backdrop that we hope to be entrusted with the responsibility of serving in the PBC in 2014 and 2015, representing the General Assembly category.

In closing, I would like to express our full support of the Peacebuilding Support Office and Peacebuilding Fund.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.